

Use of Internet & other Modern Means of Communication ♦

Internet and modern means of communication were received awfully by a large number of people and various apprehensions and harmful effects, real or virtual, were thought of as a consequence of acceptance of these modern means in society. The Muslim circles were also having mixed reaction to their emergence. Therefore, it was considered pertinent to take proper decisions on the inter-related issues in the Twelfth Seminar of the IFA, so that both the pros and cons these means could be realised and the Muslims could use them accordingly. The following resolutions were unanimously passed.

- 1.1 It is the duty of Muslim Ummah to make all possible efforts and strive to spread the word of Allah apart from protecting and preserving the identity of Islam.
- 1.2 As per "وأعدوا لهم ما استطعتم من قوة" it is absolutely correct and appropriate to employ both traditional as well as contemporary means to fulfill our duties. In fact, it is required to employ the beneficial and effective means, as the circumstances demand.
- 1.3 There is no harm in using the modern means of communication for religious purposes whether it is in the form of listening to the programmes or in the form of, practically, participating in the programmes or establishing one's own radio station.
- 1.4 In fact, the Internet has emerged as the most important means of communication in present time. It is a super means or method to convey our message to others. In order to ascertain the validity of a means or mode from the viewpoint of Shariah, it ought to be seen that for which objectives it is being used. The use of a means or mode is permissible for permissible objectives and vice-versa from the angle of Shariah. Only then it will be decided that the achievement of these goals is *Farz* (obligatory), *Wājib* (essential), *Mustahab* (preferred) or *Mubāh* (permitted). And, the extent to which the use of these means is indispensable in the quest for achieving the objectives shall determine the validity of the use of those means of communication, i.e. it is *Farz*, *Mustahab* or *Jāiz*.

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- 1.5 In the light of these principles, the participants of the Seminar observed that the use of Internet as a means of religious, preaching and collective prosperity is quite permissible and at times, vital as a means of communication.

It is also necessary to avoid forbidden and reprehensible acts in the process of presentation and display.

- 1.6 The television is a marvelous means of communication by virtue of which one can, not only listen to the voice but also see the faces of the people and events from all over the world. Sometimes, the motion pictures are telecast live on the television or the telecast of any conference, event, sports activity or function is recorded and preserved in videocassettes and telecast later on.

One peculiar problem with the television is that whether the pictures which are shown to the viewers through this medium fall under the same category of picturing and portraying which is prohibited by the *Hadith* of the Prophet (pbuh) or not. Generally, the scholars from India feel that the photographs taken with such type of cameras (motion pictures) are also a part of the prohibited ones. Some of the scholars from Arab countries are of the view that photography doesn't come under the category of prohibited pictures.

The second troublesome aspect of television is its misuse. In the veil of entertainment, enjoyment and advertisements, the dignity of women is being outraged. Vulgarity and bawdiness has become a common phenomenon. Furthermore, such morally denigrating movies and soaps are being aired on television, which simply cannot be watched by a family sitting together, or else they face tremendous embarrassment. The children get so much infatuated by the T. V. programmes that their interest in academics and books dwindles steadily. These vices are just like the tip of an iceberg. They have been brought about by the television making itself a curse on the society. No doubt, the television can be employed for certain constructive and beneficial tasks. However, its negative impact on the society at large far exceeds the virtuous and constructive gains it provides.

Under these circumstances, the participants of the Seminar call its use and the vulgarities and obscenities that it breeds as highly impermissible and a medium of destruction for the society and, thereby, instruct the populace to avoid its baneful use.

- 1.7 Another pertinent question relates to those channels, which have been established with the sole pious objective of religion and *Da'wah* and those, which are in the process of being launched. Is the establishment and drawing benefits from such channels, which are free from all sorts of vulgarities and obscenities permissible, or not?

Almost all the participants of the Seminar have voted in favour of it while a handful of them do not favour it even under such conditions. Their names have been mentioned below¹:

1. MI. Abdul Lateef, Palanpuri
2. MI. Abdul Qayyum, Palanpuri
3. MI. Abdur Rahman, Palanpuri
4. MI. Mohammed Hamza, Gorakhpuri
5. MI. *Mufti* Mohammed Zaid
6. MI. Zubair Ahmad of Muzahirul Uloom

¹ In the opinion of MI. Burhanuddin Sambhali and MI. Arshad Qasmi Farooqi, the telecast is permissible if it is live and impermissible if the programme is recorded, preserved and then aired.